

Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-10

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AID-05 IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 L-03

COME-00 /062 W

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R 042039Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECDEF/WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3853

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2385

DEFENSE FOR ISA (SA) AND OJCS/J-5

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, CO

SUBJ: COM COMMENTS ON COLOMBIA MSAP-FY78-82

1. THE FY 78-82 MSAP IS A PARTIALLY MODIFIED RESTATEMENT OF THE COLOMBIAN MILITARY MODERNIZATION PLAN, AS CONTAINED IN THE FY 77-81 POM UPON WHICH I COMMENTED EXTENSIVELY IN 75 BOGOTA 2892. THE CHANGES MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

A. A SHIFTING FORWARD BY THE GOC OF MAJOR ACQUISITION PLANNING FROM THE FY 76-81 TO THE FY 77-82 PERIOD, PROBABLY REFLECTING BOTH THE LOSS OF FY 75 CREDIT AND DOUBT AS TO THE AVAILABILITY AND AMOUNT OF FY 76 AND 77 FMS CREDITS.

B. RELIANCE ON ASSUMED AVAILABILITY OF US FMS CREDIT FOR FINANCING MOST OF COLOMBIA'S MAJOR MILITARY MODERNIZATION ACQUISITIONS, COUPLED WITH A SEEMING RETREAT FROM EARLIER PLANS TO MAKE MAJOR CASH PURCHASES.

2. I CONCUR IN MILGP'S SUGGESTION TO SUPPORT THESE CHANGES, I.E., SHIFTING FORWARD THE MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR FY 75 CREDIT TO ALLOW HIGHER CREDIT LEVELS THAN PREVIOUSLY PLANNED IN FY 78, 79 AND 80.

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IF IN FACT COLOMBIAN ECONOMIC PLANNERS ARE WILLING TO APPROVE

MILITARY CREDIT ARRANGEMENTS OF A \$30-\$32 MILLION MAGNITUDE IN EACH OF FISCAL YEARS 78 AND 79, A LEVEL WHICH THE GOC CAN PROBABLY AFFORD, WE SHOULD RELATE TO THAT LEVEL. AN FMS CREDIT PATTERN OF THIS KIND WOULD RESPOND TO THE LONG-DEFERRED MODERNIZATION OF COLOMBIAN FORCES, TO OVERCOME THE DECAPITALIZATION IN THEIR DEFENSE EXPENDITURES I DISCUSSED AT LENGTH LAST YEAR, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT WOULD BE A PRACTICAL RECOGNITION OF THE REAL POSSIBILITY THAT THE ERA OF US CREDIT FOR DEFENSE PURPOSES IS DRAWING TO ITS CLOSE. TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, IF WHILE WE STILL CAN WE ASSIST THEM IN MODERNIZING THEIR FORCES WITH A PREPONDERANCE OF US EQUIPMENT, WE MAY BE POSTPONING FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS BEYOND THE POSSIBLE END OF FMS CREDIT AVAILABILITY AN INFLUX OF THIRD-NATION MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND INFLUENCE TO FILL THE VOID WE MAY LEAVE BEHIND US, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY CREATING A MARKET FOR US CASH SALES OF COMPATIBLE EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS.

3. WITH REFERENCE TO MAP TRAINING, I CONCUR WITH BOTH THE PROPOSED AMOUNTS OF GRANT ASSISTANCE TO MAINTAIN AT CURRENT LEVELS THIS USEFUL PROGRAM, AND WITH THE PROPOSED ADDITION OF \$220 THOUSAN ANNUALLY TO SUPPORT CANAL ZONE TRAINING FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE ANNUAL GRADUATING CLASSES OF THE COLOMBIAN MILITARY ACADEMY AND ABOUT 10 MARINES FROM THEIR NAVAL ACADEMY, A TOTAL OF OVER 200. THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS OF YOUNG COLOMBIAN OFFICERS WHOULD NOT BE LOST. AS MILGP POINTS OUT, HOWEVER, IF WE CANNOT INCREASE OUR MAP TRAINING FUNDS AS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THIS VERY WORTHWHILE PROGRAM, WE MUST BE PROMPT TO SAY SO, TO AVOID AN EXACTLY OPPOSITE EFFECT ON THOSE YOUNG OFFICERS WE WOULD HOPE TO INFLUENCE FAVORABLY.

4. FINALLY, THE LOCKHEED AND OTHER SIMILAR BRIBERY ALLEGATIONS HAVE IMPACTED HEAVILY ON THE PUBLIC IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM OF THE COLOMBIAN OFFICER CORPS. IF, AS NOW SEEMS LIKELY, WE ARE FACED WITH SUPER-SENSITIVE COLOMBIAN INSISTENCE ON DEALING ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS FOR MILITARY SALES WITH THE US, I THINK WE ARE BOUND TO TRY TO MEET THEIR DESIRES--CERTAINLY SO IN THE SHORT AND MIDDLE RANGE.

5. MILGP'S CLOSING COMMENT ON THE NEED FOR CAREFUL INTERNAL US COORDINATION TO DEAL WITH THE NOW APPARENTLY INEVITABLE INTERFACE BETWEEN MILITARY AND DRUG ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE IS WELL TAKEN.
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TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THESE PROGRAMS SHOULD WHERE POSSIBLE BE COMPARTMENTALIZED, TO AVOID CONFUSION IN EITHER COLOMBIAN OR US MINDS.
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